

included, but not any more in ours, if as much, as in Elder Miller's, and he knows it. There is too great a desire for worldly popularity, and the success of numbers and social influence. In all these matters we share Brother Miller's concern, but we do not share his belief that an "order" which has no basis either in scripture, or church history, or common sense, and which in actual practice is enforced only upon the female members of the congregation, ever was, or ever will be, or can be, effectual for any other purpose but confusion, division, and an impediment to the preaching of the gospel. *That is its history in the past, and that is the responsibility its advocates assume for it in the future.* The teachings of the word applied to the conscience, and the operations of divine grace in the mind and heart, are the only barriers against worldliness that are worth anything. That is the ground on which the Brethren stand. Ecclesiastical rulings are worse than useless; they are pernicious. You can not legislate worldliness out of people, or religion into them. When will the leaders of the German Baptist Brethren learn that lesson.

But the trouble of which Elder Miller complains is not confined to the educated, intelligent young men of his church. Intelligent young sisters are raising the cry of "inconsistency" because they are asked to make themselves conspicuous by their head-dress while the men dress as they please. Elder John E. Mohler contributes to the same number of the Messenger in which appears Elder Miller's editorial an article on "Why Our Daughters Are Not in the Church". He says: "Once you *convince* the mother that when her boy and girl, both church members, go to the village, he wearing his school coat and she the school hat she used to wear, the boy is approved by heaven and the girl condemned, you may depend upon it the mother will convince her daughter of this greath truth". What kind of argument *could* convince an intelligent mother or father or son or daughter that a boy coming into the church wearing the same clothes he wore before becoming a church member, and a girl joining the church wearing the same clothes she wore while at school and before she became a member of the church, the *girl is condemned and the boy approved of heaven*. Does Elder Miller need be surprised when he finds that intelligent young men and women turn away from and refuse to subscribe to such ridiculous and utterly absurd teaching as that? It were just as easy to convince intelligent people that black is white and white black. The girl with the hat she wore at school may be under *condemnation*, and the boy with his best clothes under the *approval of Annual Meeting*, but under *heaven* both are either approved or condemned so far as the wearing of their clothes is concerned. "In Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female."

Elder Miller makes the statement (without proof) that "we have lost the distinctive features of the church of Jesus Christ." Either Brother Miller believes that a certain cut of the coat, a woman's bonnet and cap are the "distinctive features of the church of Jesus Christ," or (1) he makes an unwarranted statement without knowledge of the facts in the case, or (2) in a little too much zeal for a dying cause he makes a statement the meaning of which he does not know, or (3) he must believe that the German Baptist church alone

can possess these distinctive features or (4) he wilfully misrepresents us before his people. What are the distinctive features of the church of Jesus Christ? Does the Brethren church hold to any of them? Probably Elder Miller needs light as to the faith and practice of the Brethren. (1) We believe that repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and a covenant to take the gospel as our only rule of faith and practice are the only conditions of baptism. (2) We believe in all the elements that constitute the New Testament idea of conversion. (3) We believe that trine immersion is the only mode of Christian baptism taught in the gospel. (4) We believe in the confirmation of baptized believers by the laying on of hands. (5) We believe in and practice all the ordinances of the church as instituted by our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, such as the washing of the saints' feet as a means of grace, the Lord's Supper, consisting of the ordinary elements of a common meal, and the communion of the bread and wine. (6) We believe that simplicity of dress should characterize the children of God of both sexes, but do not prescribe an order of dress for either. (7) We believe in and specially emphasize growth and development of the higher spiritual life, reception of the Holy Spirit into the heart and life of believers, complete surrender of body, soul and spirit to God, cultivation of the fruits of the Spirit of which the greatest is love, and that by the manifestation of Christlike love for one another we are to be known as the disciples of Jesus and not by any prescribed order of dress. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." The church of the Brethren is thoroughly committed to the evangelization of the world according to the teaching of the Savior in the great Commission. Are any of these principles and doctrines "distinctive features of the church of Jesus Christ?" Will Elder Miller please answer, and if they are, will he please redeem his reputation for truth and fairness by recalling the statement "that we have lost these features," and thus set himself in the proper light before his own and our people? Will he?

Now we can well afford to dismiss Brother Miller with what we have said, but we want to say a word to our Brethren. Years and years ago there would have been an exodus of German Baptists into the Brethren church but for one thing, and that was the almost utter disorganization which marked our early policy. Much has been said about this and that one of our general conferences being the best, but the first Winona conference which was characterized with much discussion and agitation was in respect to the shaping of our church policy the best we have ever had or ever will have. Why? Because it marked the end of the policy of scatteration, and the beginning of the policy of organization and co operation. It was the supreme crisis of the church. It was the beginning of a new era. The written scheme of a compact organization and orderly church government which barely failed of a majority vote at that conference, was nevertheless adopted in principle, and has been steadily improved upon since. That meeting was the birth of more than one new movement of vital and universal importance among us, and the church owes a debt of gratitude to the Brethren who were chiefly instrumental in carrying thru